

OCT 16 1953

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Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA

The Washington Post

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AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1953

PAGE 26

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Soviet Minorities Again

"dismemberment" of Russia. The American committee's position is that these questions might well be set aside until the primary object of overthrowing the Communist dictatorship has been achieved.

Some Americans who have had opportunity to talk with refugees from Soviet rule before they were adopted and indoctrinated by the various nationalist organizations operating in the West are inclined to agree with Mr. Kerensky concerning the absence of acute nationalistic feeling among those who were born and matured under the Soviet regime. On one point, at any rate, most observers agree: that nearly all anti-Communist refugees from the Soviet Union nowadays are characterized by a certain mental rigidity and political intransigence, and that the very notion of the *modus vivendi* or a working compromise is something totally alien to their experience.

From time to time we have had occasion to mention the grievances of minority groups within the Soviet Union, which are reported to constitute an abiding problem for the Communist regime. The fact, however, is that they also constitute a problem for the adversaries of communism. It is virtually impossible to unite emigres or refugees from the Soviet Union upon anything resembling a common policy or program, since the only common denominator among them is a hatred of the Communist masters.

The problem is pointed up in a recent letter to the *New York Times* by Alexander Kerensky, who served as Minister of Justice and later as Prime Minister of the provisional government of Russia between the February and October revolutions of 1917. The letter has to do with the recent breach between the American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism and the so-called Coordinating Center for anti-Communist activity among refugees, with which Mr. Kerensky is identified.

Mr. Kerensky asserts that discussion of a prospective "dismemberment" of Russia into autonomous or quasi-autonomous national states is dangerous and foolish, and that the less said about the subject "the greater will be the chances of America's success in the struggle for her own and the world's liberty." He insists that the testimony of all recent arrivals from behind the Iron Curtain is that there are no longer any real national enmities among the peoples of the Soviet Union, and that the assumption of the existence of such enmities constituted Hitler's most disastrous mistake. Mr. Kerensky may very well be right; but the organizations which purport to represent Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Caucasians and others are saying just the opposite.

Emigres professing to represent the minority groups have been demanding a declaration favoring "self determination" among the various nationalities included within the Soviet empire. The Great Russian emigres, among whom Mr. Kerensky is to be included, are, naturally enough, bitterly opposed to any program that might seem directed toward the

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